

III. REMARKS

Claims 1-8 and 10-15 are pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12 and 13 have been amended; and, claim 9 is cancelled. This reply is being submitted in response to the Office Action of January 10, 2008. Applicant does not acquiesce in the correctness of the rejections and reserve the right to present specific arguments regarding any rejected claims not specifically addressed. Furthermore, Applicant reserves the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the original claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is requested.

Applicant notices that the Examiner in the Office Action did not acknowledge foreign application priority to Japanese Application 2002-218655, filed on July 26, 2002. As such, Applicant reasserts said priority and requests the Examiner to acknowledge said priority in the next missive.

Under 37 CFR 1.105, the Office requires additional information. Several drawings are objected to. Various portions of the specification are objected to for various informalities. Claims 1 and 9 are objected to for various informalities. Claims 3, 5, 8-10, 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, for allegedly being indefinite. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bandat *et al.* (US Patent No. 6,816,902), hereinafter "Bandat". Claims 2-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being anticipated by Bandat, in view of Deborin *et al.* (US Patent No.

7,185,364), hereinafter “Deborin”. Claims 5-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being anticipated by Deborin, in view of Dewan.

A. Request for Additional Information

In response to the request for additional information, Applicant is without immediate knowledge or information sufficient to form a belief as to the truth of the allegations contained in paragraphs 3-5 of the Office Action, and therefore, on that basis is unable to respond further to the request.

B. Drawing Objection

In response to the drawing objection Applicant has revised various figures and are included, under separate cover, in this response. Accordingly, Applicant requests withdrawal to the objection.

C. Specification Objection

In response to the specification objection, Applicant has capitalized the name FORMWAVE throughout the specification. With regards to the other informalities listed, Applicant respectfully responds that the specification, as currently written, while perhaps being less than grammatically perfect nonetheless complies with, *inter alia*, all the statutory requirements under 35 USC 112, both first and second paragraphs. One of ordinary skill in the art is enabled to practice the invention. Accordingly, Applicant requests withdrawal of the objection.

D. Objection to Claims 1 and 9

In response to the claim objection, Applicant has amended claim 1 and cancelled claim 9. Accordingly, Applicant requests withdrawal of the objection.

E. Rejection of Claims 3, 5, 8-10, 12 and 13 under §112, Second Paragraph

With regards to the rejection of claims 3, 5, 8-10, 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, Applicant has amended claims to address the alleged indefiniteness.

First, Applicant has clarified claim 3 to address the rejection. Further, with regards to the rejection of the use of the phrase “work items selectable” for allegedly lacking antecedent basis and lacking definition, Applicant notes that the claims, as written, use the phrase “work items”, wherein said phrase “work items” is modified by the phrase “selectable for each node within the consolidation range [as] determine by said means for determining a range of consolidation”. In any event, Applicant has clarified claims 5, 8, 10, 12 and 13 to remove any alleged ambiguity; and, cancelled claim 9.

Claims 3, 5, 8, 10, 12 and 13 are clearly now definite within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Accordingly, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection.

F. Rejection of Claims 1-15 under §102(b) and §103(a)

These rejections are defective because the Bandat does not disclose each and every feature set forth in the claims as required under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

Claim 1, as amended, now recites:

A workflow system comprising:

operating computer terminals executing a workflow; and
a workflow server connected to said operating computer terminals in a network to manage the workflow, wherein said workflow server consolidates information necessary for processing multiple consecutive nodes to be processed by one participant operating one of said operating computer terminals and sends the consolidated information to the operating computer terminal.

Bandat fails to disclose, *inter alia*, the features of a “wherein said workflow server consolidates information necessary for processing multiple consecutive nodes to be processed by one participant”. (*see e.g.*, claim 1 and similarly claimed in claims 5, 8 and 12).

In rejecting claim 1, the Office alleges that the aggregation of activities in Bandat is a teaching of the consolidation of information in the claimed invention. Office Action, item 22, page 9. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection because, in sum, consolidation and aggregation do not mean the same thing, as compared between the claimed invention and Bandat. Applicant is willing to concede that Bandat in general “encapsulates” those parts of a workflow model that are defined for execution on one specific workstation. Abstract. However, Applicant contends that Bandat is not addressing one of the central issues that the claimed invention addresses; namely, the unnecessary repetition of work in workflows on consecutive nodes by people, possibly, having multiple roles. *See e.g.*, ¶[0005] in Background of the Invention section. The claimed invention is able to consolidate information (i.e., reduce, simplify, etc.) while Bandat merely ‘carves out’ or aggregates its information on islands. The Office has not

met the burden in making a *prima facie* case of anticipation in rejecting claim 1. In view of the foregoing, Bandat does not disclose each and every feature of claim 1.

With respect to independent claims 5, 8 and 12, as explained above with regards to claim 1, Applicant submits that the cited combinations (i.e., Bandat and Deborin and/or Dewan) do not disclose similarly claimed features of independent claims 5, 8 and 12. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections.

With respect to dependent claims 2-4, 6, 7, 10, 11 and 13-15 Applicant submits that these claims are allowable based on their dependency from allowable independent claims. The dependent claims are also believed to be allowable based for their own additional features.

V. CONCLUSION

In light of the above remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner require anything further to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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